

Share Your Pain, I'll Share Mine by frnkxo

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Alternate Universe - Superheroes/Superpowers, M/M, Slow Burn, The Upside Down, Universe Alteration

Language: English

Characters: Billy Hargrove, Eleven (Stranger Things), Joyce Byers, Original Characters, Steve Harrington, Will Byers

Relationships: Billy Hargrove/Steve Harrington

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2018-01-20

Updated: 2018-01-16

Packaged: 2022-04-20 16:22:36

Rating: Not Rated

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,318

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Among the endless list of things that I didn't know, a few of them were this:

I didn't know why I was the only one to get a superpower from having been in the Upside Down. I didn't know how I ended up with a superpower. I didn't know why it had to be the worst superpower of all time.

Why couldn't I have gotten the ability to fly or become invisible? Or move things with my mind like Eleven? Or even stop time or run really fast? Anything would've been better than what I ended up with.

Share Your Pain, I'll Share Mine

I didn't know why it had to happen to me. I didn't even know how it did. All I knew was that it felt like a punishment. An almost-secret punishment that less than 1% of the world would ever be in on.

I used to be normal and I didn't know if that was worse than what I was later. If someone gave me the option to stay the way I became or to go back, I wouldn't have an answer prepared. Yeah, I could've been "king of the school" again and get Nancy back, but I didn't think it was that straightforward anymore. I used to, before this, but hindsight is always 20/20.

I wasn't sure she ever loved me. That's a big accusation, but it's one that stuck in the back of my mind for months. Ever since she became obsessed with the word "bullshit" in that dim-lighted bathroom. A part of me hoped that stain never came out of her sweater. Maybe that was kinda mean, but she could buy a new sweater. I couldn't buy a new heart or scrub the stain out of the one that she left on mine.

I wished Nancy not loving me was the biggest of my problems. I wished the only thing I was haunted by was the memory of her perfume or the way her hair curled around her face. But instead I was also haunted by the gloves that were constantly on my hands, like another layer of skin.

Among the endless list of things that I didn't know, a few of them were this:

I didn't know why I was the only one to get a superpower from having been in the Upside Down. I didn't know how I ended up with a superpower. I didn't know why it had to be the worst superpower of all time.

Why couldn't I have gotten the ability to fly or become invisible? Or move things with my mind like Eleven? Or even stop time or run really fast? *Anything* would've been better than what I ended up with.

Whenever I touched someone, skin-to-skin, I felt their physical or

mental pain as if it were my own. Over time I realized that whichever one was worse was the one that I ended up feeling. At first I thought that wasn't fair, but I came to the conclusion that it was better than feeling both at once.

Anyway, that's where the gloves came in. If I wore gloves, I wouldn't be bombarded with anyone else's pain. And it might seem like that's all fine and good in the cold weather, but it was really fucking hard to get shit done with winter gloves on. It took me about a week to figure out I couldn't wear cotton gloves all the time. So I ended up opting for latex gloves instead. They work really well, but now everyone in Hawkins (save for the people who already knew about the Upside Down) think I'm deathly afraid of germs.

Of course, that's the story that the government told me I had to give people if they ever asked. They also told me to play it up a bit, so then I had to pretend I didn't want to be within five feet of anyone with a cold or that I didn't trust the cafeteria food to not have hair or mold in it. I had to start packing lunch from home and spending half my babysitting money on latex gloves and pretending to hyperventilate if someone sneezed or coughed in the same room as me.

Really, it was starting to take its toll. I didn't know how Eleven managed to go her whole life like this, hiding something from everyone around her.

"Harrington!" A voice called from the doorway of the locker room. I knew immediately that it was the coach, but his voice cutting through the silence made me flinch anyway.

"Yeah?" I asked, turning to look at him from the spot in front of my locker. I tried to drop gym class, I really, really did. But the school just wouldn't let me.

"Let's go! We're waiting on you!"

Did he have to yell everything?

"Coach, I really don't think I can today. Just- everyone's gonna be all sweaty and," I started pretending like the very thought of someone

else's sweat on me would give me a panic attack. I was getting good at acting. "I- I don't know if I can handle that. I already had a very close encounter with a dirty fork today."

The real reason I didn't want to participate today was that we were playing basketball. Shirts vs. skins. My best chance at getting through this period without touching someone else was if I ended up on the shirts team or if the coach lets me sit out. Fingers fucking crossed.

It definitely didn't look like he was going to let me sit out, not by the look on his face, so I reluctantly made my way into the gym. I took my place at the end of the line and tried to ignore the way people looked at me. I was always trying to ignore the way people looked at me, but that's much easier said than done.

One by one, the team captains picked players until it was down to me and one other boy. It was the shirts turn to pick and I knew -i just fucking knew- that I would be the last choice. I always was, ever since I got labelled a freak. So of course, the other kid got picked, leaving me on the skins team and forced to hear the team captain groan like he'd been assigned the most incompetent person in the class. Which, to be fair, maybe he had.

Even more reluctantly, I pulled my shirt off and made my way to the court.

God, the game didn't even start yet and I'm already sweating. One thing I've learned in the last few months is that no one is ever not hurting.

I managed to make it a good ten minutes without any serious contact. I did find out that Ben had a slight headache and Conner should've probably gotten his shoulder checked out at least a week ago, but they faded away pretty fast.

It's always the emotional pain that lingers the longest. I knew this because I touched Joyce once and couldn't go to school for a week because the paranoia and anxiety of leaving the house was too intense. Will brushed by me accidently once and the same thing

happened. From then on, as a rule, I stayed as healthy a distance from the Byers' as I could without being rude.

Though, I guess they wouldn't really see it as being rude. If anyone could understand this stuff, it would be them. I just don't want to make them feel bad.

My thought process got interrupted by two things:

The first thing to hit me was his body. Or maybe he deliberately pushed me with his hands. Either way, I felt myself falling.

The second thing was the overwhelming pain that filled my mind. It was so dense and so *heavy* that I forgot to catch myself before I hit the floor. But my own pain, the headache that I knew I'd get from smashing my face against the (dirty) gym floor, was the last thing I was thinking about.

"Harrington? Are you *crying*?"

I pushed myself into a sitting position and looked up at the source of the voice. Through my tears (that I really hadn't even noticed were already dripping off my face) I saw that the person who had pushed me was none other than the new kid. Billy Hargrove. And the emotional pain he was going through left me a sobbing mess on the floor of the gym.